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Bhagavad Gita, Natyashastra part of UNESCO's World Register

Manuscripts of Bhagavad Gita and Natyashastra are among 74 documentary collections added to UNESCO's Memory of the World Register. Entries on scientific revolution, women's contribution to history and milestones from 72 countries and four organisations are included in it. The development comes on World Heritage Day (April 18). PM Modi described the inscriptions as "a proud moment for every Indian across the world" | P7

OPPOSITION LIGHTS INTO V-P's N-MISSILE BROADSIDE AGAINST SC

Never seen any RS chairperson make such political comments, says Kapil Sibal

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

A day after Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar used strong words against the judiciary, several leaders from across the Opposition spectrum lit into him on Thursday, asserting such interventions are part of a broader, dangerous strategy to erode judicial independence, weaken federalism and centralise executive power.

Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal hit out at the V-P for questioning the Supreme Court that set a timeline for the President to take decisions. Sibal said the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha Chairman remain equidistant between the Opposition and the ruling party, adding he had never seen any Rajya Sabha Chairman make "political statements" of this nature.

"Independence of the judiciary is fundamental to democracy. What is being done is unconstitutional," he added.

The Constitution — not the government — gave Article 142 powers to the Supreme Court. "I respect him a lot but you said Article 142 is nuclear missile material, how can you say this?" Sibal said.

Echoing the view, Constitutional expert P D T Achary told this paper that the SC rightly used Article 142 and did not override any core Constitutional provision. "Article 142 empowers the highest judicial forum in this country to do complete justice in a particular case. Granting complete justice is the aim of the judiciary and the Constitution has entrusted the SC with this job," he said. Dhankhar had described Article 142, which grants plenary powers to the Supreme Court, as a "nuclear missile against democratic forces available to the judiciary 24x7".

Senior Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala said the ruling is "timely, accurate, courageous, and a correction to the notion that those holding high office are above checks and balances... In our democracy, only the Constitution of India is supreme and most elevated. No office — be it that of the President, PM or governor — is above the fetters of Constitutional propriety," he said.

TMC leader Kalyan Banerjee accusing the V-P of "repeated disregard" for the judiciary.

Khalistani radical wanted for terror acts held in US

HARPREET BAJWA @ Chandigarh

GANGSTER-TURNED-TERRORIST **Harpreet Singh alias Happy Passia**, wanted in connection with multiple terror attacks across Punjab and who is alleged to have collaborated with Pakistan's Deep State and Khalistani group BKI, has been arrested in the US, officials said Friday.

Passia alias Jora, who had illegally entered the US, was arrested by the FBI and US Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Removal Operations in Sacramento, the US federal law enforcement agency said.

Punjab Police chief Gaurav Yadav said the arrest is a "major milestone in the success of war against terror", adding the matter has been taken up with the Central government and efforts are on to extradite Passia. Yadav said between 2023 and 2025, Passia played a "central role in orchestrating targeted killings, grenade attacks on police establishments, and extortion across Punjab and various other states".

In the last seven months, 16 grenade attacks took place in Punjab, mostly targeting police posts, religious places and residences of public figures including BJP leader Manoranjan Kalia. Passia's name has cropped up during investigations into at least 14 such attacks.

It is reliably learnt that Pasia is the key operative of the Khalistani militant outfit Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) which has ties with Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan.

Since 2023, Passia is associated with Khalistani militant Harwinder Singh Sandhu alias Rinda and they have been involved in setting up terror modules in Punjab, sources said.

TNIE EXCLUSIVE

Witness loses memory; pregnant woman's death case in limbo for 15 years

YATHIRAJU @ Bengaluru

THE crucial trial of a heart-wrenching incident in 2010 when a pregnant woman and her baby in the womb died due to the alleged negligence of doctors and hospital staff is stuck at the evidence stage.

This is because the doctor who conducted the autopsy on the deceased woman lost memory after he met with an accident in 2019 and is still not in a position to give evidence. His deposition is major material for the prosecution to prove its case against seven accused, including three doctors in the city.

The deceased pregnant woman, Kapali Patne, was admitted to Santhosh Hospital on April 16, 2010. She was shifted to the operation theatre (OT) on the first floor of the hospital for an elective operation.

At the OT, the accused staff negligently dropped Patne from the OT table at a height of 3-4 ft. She sustained a fracture of the left sacroiliac joint. As the accused doctors did not allegedly attempt to save her in time, Patne and her child in the womb died. The CID took up the investigation and filed the chargesheet.

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HC invokes Draupadi, says woman not hubby's property

SHEKHAR SINGH @ New Delhi

THE Delhi High Court has dropped an adultery case filed by a man against another person who was allegedly in a relationship with his wife. The court said women cannot be treated as "property of their husbands".

Justice Neena Bansal Krishna referred to Draupadi from *Mahabharat*, and ruled, "She had no say in the matter, and what followed was a terrible war that caused the deaths of many." The court said even though Draupadi's tale is well-known, the society took a long time to understand that treating women as a chattel is wrong. It was only when the Supreme Court, in the Joseph Shine case in 2018, struck down Section 497 of the IPC (adultery) that the society reflected on this misogynistic view.

The case was filed by a man who claimed his wife was having an affair with the petitioner. He claimed that the two had gone to Lucknow, stayed in a hotel room together pretending to be a married couple, and had sexual relations. When he confronted his wife, she told him to leave if he had a problem.

Justice Krishna said that as per an old ruling, once a law is declared unconstitutional, it applies to all ongoing cases. The court said sharing a hotel room does not prove that two people had sex. "Just staying in the same room isn't enough to assume anything happened," the judge said, discharging the man from the case and setting aside the complaint.

TARIFF TRACKER

DON blinks

Tit-for-tat China levy over? "I don't want to go higher. At a certain point... people don't buy," Trump said

- White House suggests broader US-Europe summit during Trump's visit. Meloni is bridge between US-EU
- White House economic adviser Kevin Hassett says Trump and his team are studying whether to fire Fed Chair Jerome Powell or not | P9

EXPRESS READ

PM speaks to Musk on tech ties amid trade talks

New Delhi: PM Narendra Modi on Friday held a phone conversation with Tesla and SpaceX CEO and a key advisor of President Donald Trump, Elon Musk, discussing opportunities for collaboration in technology and innovation. The call comes amid trade negotiations and ahead of the upcoming visit of US Vice President J D Vance to India from April 21, as Musk-led ventures Tesla and Starlink also look to expand their presence in the Indian market | P8